

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 198342 TOSEC 090008

NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4511 ACTION STATE AUG 5.

QUOTE E C R E T PRETORIA 4511

NODIS CHEROKEE

WASHINGTON PASS TO THE SECRETARY

FROM AMB LOW

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS

1. JOHNNY GRAHAM BRIEFED ME IN DETAIL ON STATUS OF VARIOUS
TRACKS IN RHODESIA NEGOTIATIONS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING MY
ARRIVAL IN SALISBURY FRIDAY AFTERNOON. WHEN INFORMED OF
OWENS'S PROPOSED SECRET VISIT TO RHODESIA WITH NKOMO, GRAHAM
ADVISED AGAINST IT AS I WOULD HAVE DONE. IN THE EVENT,
SMITH FOLLOWED HIS RATHER NEGATIVE RECEPTION OF THE IDEA

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DELIVERED THROUGH BRAND FOURIE, WITH A CLEAR REJECTION
WHICH JACK GAYLARD (CABINET SECRETARY) GAVE TO JOHNNY
GRAHAM. I WOULD EXPECT THE THE SAME REACTION FROM JOSHUA NKOMO.
UNLESS THERE IS A MAJOR SURPRISE FROM THE OWEN/NKOMO
CONVERSATION, THEREFORE, THAT INITIATIVE APPEARS TO BE DEAD.

2. WITHIN HOURS OF MY ARRIVAL WE MET WITH GAYLARD AND HIS

OFFICIAL LEVEL COLLEAGUES (LAW AND ORDER SECRETARY CLAYPOLE, CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERT GEORGE SMITH, AND FINANCE SECRETARY DAVID YOUNG) FOR A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE OPTIONS OWEN AND THE BRITISH HAVE PREPARED: (A) AGREED CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL SEPARATE FROM RESIDENT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSITION PERIOD LEADING TO ELECTIONS; (B) REFERENDUM AFTER BRIEF PERIOD FOLLOWED BY INDEPENDENCE, WITH SEPARATE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AS IN OPTION A; OR (C) RESIDENT COMMISSIONER SERVING ALSO AS COUNCIL CHAIRMAN UNTIL ELECTION. THE CONVERSATION WAS A LENGTHY ONE COVERING MUCH OF THE SAME GROUND OF MY PREVIOUS MEETINGS (RHODESIAN OBJECTIONS TO REPLACING THE CHIEF OF POLICE, COMPLAINT AGAINST THE PROPOSAL FOR CREATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE ARMY "BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES," ETC.) THEY APPEAR TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE BRITISH EFFORT TO PERMIT GREATER AUTONOMY TO THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT THROUGH DECREASED ROLE OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER AND WEAKENED CONTROL OVER HIM FROM LONDON. NOT SURPRISINGLY THEY WERE SKEPTICAL OF THE SUGGESTION OF AN AGREED CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNING COUNCIL SEPARATE FROM THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER.

3. GAYLORD WILL DO A PAPER FOR A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO BE HELD TUESDAY, AUGUST 8 PROPOSING AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING FOR AUGUST 12-13 AND OUTLINING AN AGENDA BASED ON GRAHAM'S AND MY PAPER. HE WILL NOT GET INTO
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THE OPTIONS DISCUSSED PARA 2 ABOVE. IN THE MEANTIME GRAHAM AND I WILL SEE IAN SMITH SUNDAY OR EARLY NEXT WEEK IN AN EFFORT TO IMPRESS ON HIM THE NEED FOR EARLY AND VIGOROUS EFFORTS TOWARDS PROGRESS TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING.

4. IN MY ABSENCE, GRAHAM HAS MET WITH THE HEAD OF THE FARMERS ASSOCIATION, A PROMINENT LAWYER, FORMER FEDERATION OF CENTRAL AFRICA PRIME MINISTER ROY WELENSKY, AND COMBINED OPERATIONS CHIEF PETER WALLS. ALL HAVE STRESSED TO HIM THE CRUCIAL NATURE OF THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS WHEN THE FARMERS WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO PLANT NEXT YEAR'S CROPS. WALLS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE LACK OF POLITICAL GUIDANCE WHICH HE IS GETTING AND THE CONSEQUENT NEED TO TAKE DECISIONS WITH DEFINITE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS (LIKE THE RECENT RAIDS IN MOZAMBIQUE) ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE. ANOTHER STRAND WHICH IS BECOMINGLY INCREASINGLY EVIDENT HERE IS MUZOREWA'S POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES INSIDE THE UANC. THE PRESS TODAY CARRIES REPORTS OF NEW CALLS FOR A UANC CONGRESS AND CRITICISM OF TRIBALISM WITHIN THE PARTY.

5. COMMENT: FROM THE TIME OWEN PROPOSED THE IDEA IN LONDON JULY 19, I HAVE FELT GREAT SKEPTICISM ABOUT SEPARATING THE POSITION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNING OR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FROM THAT OF RESIDENT COMMISSIONER IN ORDER TO FIND A SPECIAL POSITION FOR NKOMO. I THINK IT UNLIKELY IT WILL WORK AND AM CONCERNED ABOUT IT BEING PROPOSED TO THE RHODESIANS EVEN IN THIS PRIVATE AND RESTRICTED WAY. LIKE OWENS' PROPOSAL FOR A SECRET MEETING, I THINK IT UNLIKELY IT WILL PROSPER, AND THEREFORE BELIEVE IT SOON WILL BE DROPPED. HOWEVER, SHOULD IT BECOME KNOWN THAT IT WAS PROPOSED, WE COULD BE EMBARRASSED EVEN THOUGH NKOMO'S NAME IS NOT SPECIFICALLY ATTACHED TO IT. SUGGEST WE LET THE BRITISH KNOW OF OUR MISGIVINGS--PROVIDED MY VIEWS
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ARE SHARED IN WASHINGTON--SO AS TO CAUSE THEM NOT TO PRESSURE ON THIS OPTION. EDMONDSON UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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